

NEW KIDS IN CITY HALL: A CHAT WITH THE FIRST-YEAR COUNCIL MEMBERS

BUCKING TRADITION: How to Raise a Championship Bull / **ON THE SET:** Meet Eric Nelsen of "1883"

fortworth

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STAYCATIONS

You don't have to travel far for a little R&R



Hotel Otto

7 of the best places to kick back in your hometown

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Close to Home

Seven staycation ideas for the new year

BY MARY MURPHY
PHOTOS BY CRYSTAL WISE

When “home” is the second-largest growing city in the U.S., with top-grade museums, an energetic downtown scene, and a developing historic district, sightseeing in your own backyard isn’t such a bad idea. Add in a few boutique hotels where you can unwind after a day of adventure, and you’ll have all the elements of a far-off vacation, without the extensive travel time. Thanks to five new and noteworthy Fort Worth hotels and two longtime favorites in neighboring cities, Arlington and Grapevine, there’s no need to search far and wide for a unique getaway this year. Look close to home, and you’ll start to see things from a new perspective.



Hotel Drover

Pulling up to Hotel Drover, you may not realize that you're driving on historic bricks. The "crown jewel of Mule Alley" has taken extreme care to integrate old with new — beginning with the bricks outside the front door.

Hotel Drover opened last March as phase two of three in the Mule Alley development, intentionally combining high-class luxury with classic cowboy motifs.

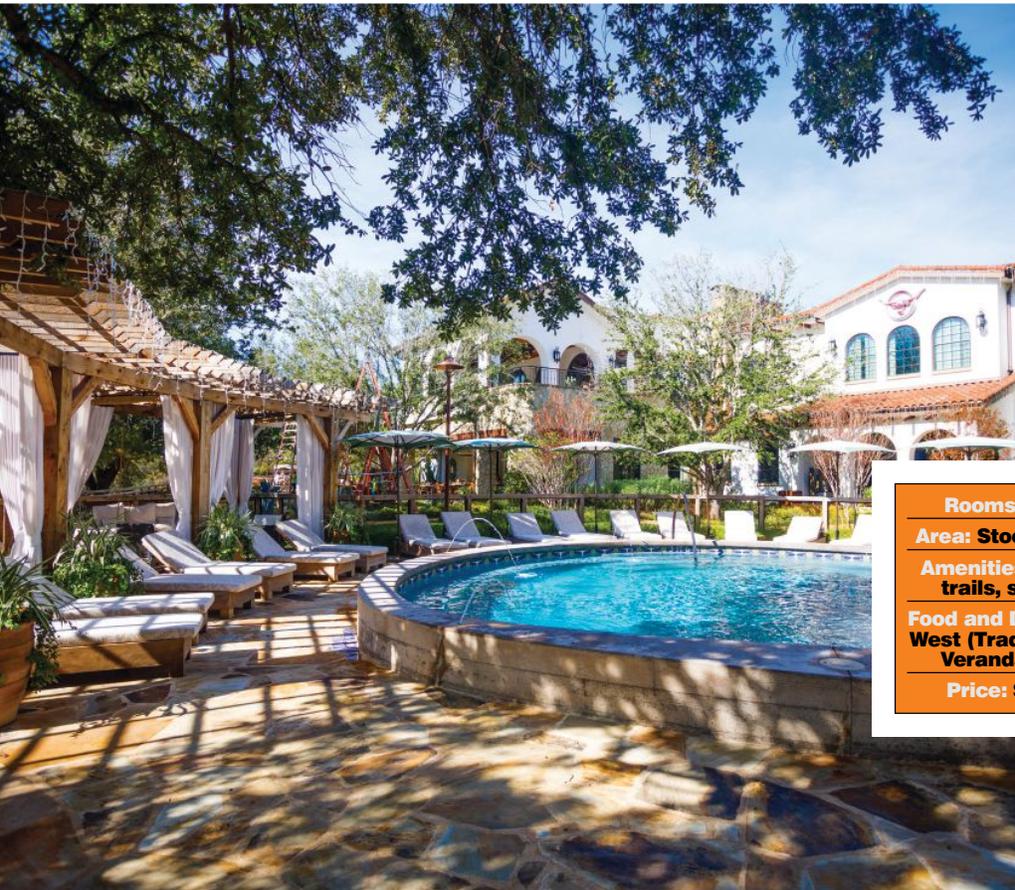
The hotel's name tips its hat to the cowboys who once traversed this area, specifically, the drovers who directed cattle, hogs, and sheep into the largest livestock-trading center in the Southwest. One of the first things guests see on entering the hotel: a life-size, mixed-metal statue of a drover welcoming them.

Over 10,000 hours were spent curating artwork for Hotel Drover — not by a designer but by hotel ownership themselves. The labor of love led to an eclectic "Western Luxe" atmosphere. Guests often bypass check-in desks to admire the lobby's décor, featuring a large living-room-style area with ample seating and a fireplace. Beyond glass-paned doors, next to shelves of cowboy hats, there's a 500-year-old Belgian watering trough surrounded by comfortable seats outside.

The hotel's expansive Backyard is home to the Veranda Bar, a heated pool and hot tub, and a gravel pathway that winds through the well-landscaped area. Follow it to find patio chairs surrounding gas-line fire pits and a stage where you can experience "Backyard Unplugged" on weekends.

This area of the Stockyards is bustling with new businesses like Sidesaddle Saloon, Fleastyle, and Provender Hall, soon to be joined by Melt Ice Creams and two new restaurants from chef Tim Love. There's a lot to explore and old-time favorite activities to enjoy. But, if you're inclined to stay in, 97 West, a delicious restaurant that serves up adventurous takes on classic American dishes resides just west of the lobby.

200 Mule Alley
hoteldrover.com



Rooms: 200
Area: Stockyards
Amenities: Pool, trails, shops
Food and Drink: 97 West (Traditional), Veranda Bar
Price: \$\$\$\$

